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Garrison's Case

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Having been ousted by the recent national election from his accustomed position of prominence in the public prints, Jim Garrison has thundered back to center stage. The New Orleans district attorney announced that the long-delayed trial of Clay L. Shaw on charges of conspiring to assassinate President Kennedy will get under way January 21.

That date happens to be just one day after the attention-getting business of the transfer of government is out of the way. So Garrison should have the field pretty much to himself — which appears to be the way he likes it.

Garrison has, in the past, voiced impatience over the delays that have kept the case out of court. He has also expressed his displeasure over the adverse comments by the press and television regarding his case, which, he says, are based on an incomplete knowledge of the evidence he will offer.

Both points are well taken. The delays have, for the most part, come from the defendant, who contends that he is persecuted rather than prosecuted by the flamboyant and zealous D.A. As for the press reaction, there has been a tendency on the part of commentators to turn aside from the thought of reopening the old wounds—wounds that still hurt more than five years after they were inflicted. The result has been a general prejudgment. And Garrison is prevented by law from countering by the release of such evidence as he may have.

The prospect of the trial is not a happy one. From what is known of the prosecution's case, it involves a twilight world of neurotics, homosexuals and general social misfits. Garrison, it would seem, intends to turn over the rock and ask the world to join him in an examination of the frightened, pallid and unhealthy life forms that will be revealed.

It is not a pleasant thought. But since the trial appears inevitable, it should be done quickly. We wait to see the full scope of Garrison's evidence with impatience, and a touch of nausea.